

Vices Against Humanity

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Summary: Mikasa Ackerman, a college senior gets hooked up into a MMORPG by her brother, Eren. Alongside Eren, Armin tries to influence Mikasa and helps her get a life of her own in the world of a game that has human-eating giants called titans. Modern AU, Reincarnation AU, RivaMika (Full summary inside)

1. Summary

Vices Against Humanity

A tale set in an alternative universe of the modern age in Tokyo, Japan, wherein Mikasa Ackerman, a senior in her college gets pressed as her adoptive brother, Eren Jaeger, a senior, still in his high school days, gets hooked up into a MMORPG. Alongside Eren, Armin, a young man of German decent, truthfully from Britain, tries to influence Mikasa and helps her get a life of her own in the world of a game that has human-eating giants called titans. Mikasa eventually enjoys it and appreciates the efforts of her brother. What she didn't know was, that this new leisure time of hers can affect her time management issues and her part-time job as the personal secretary of a biracial midget whom she shares no relation or blood whatsoever, excluding their surnames, Levi Rivaille Ackerman, the heir to a big company based in Tokyo, Japan.

2. Nostalgic Signs

Chapter 1: Nostalgic Signs

â€"Mikasa Ackermanâ€"

It was another ordinary day in the Jaeger household somewhere in the depths of Tokyo, a family of three pure-blooded Germans with a biracial Eurasian sat down in the dining room, having a casual breakfast. Eren Jaeger sat down beside his mother, across from Mikasa who was seated down beside their calm father. They might've been that

stereotypical family of four if it wasn't for the ruckus oh so early in the morning.

"Eren, can't you care more? I believe it's going to be the third time this week that you're going to get late!" Karla, the nurturing mother of the family, exclaimed. She didn't seem mad at the green-eyed monster that she was referring to, Eren, but it was evident that she was rather disappointed about her son's current state somewhere in his educational field.

Eren slumped back on his chair and took a mouthful of his bread, his reply to her open statement, muffled.

Karla stood up; putting both her hands on her hips, shifted her weight to the other side and took her already clean plate to the sink to be washed. "What was that, dear? I believe we don't talk with our mouth full." With that, Eren started chewing faster, and even louder. The raven-haired girl just stared at him, playing with her chopsticks that carried some rice, making a snappy sound. "Mom, I saidâ€¦It's only Wednesday!"

Letting the water run down to the sink, practically wasting it, Karla let go of her dish and disregarded her soapy hands, turning back to Eren to make a comeback. "That's the point. It's Wednesday!" She stated. "Don't tell me you're planning to be late for a week again."

As carefree as the green-eyed boy was, he never did mind it. He was just looking at the newspaper as he and Mikasa basked in the silence. "Then I won't tell youâ€¦"

She swore she heard a crashing sound from outside and snapped, finally lifting the tone she rested on her voice. "Jesus, Eren! Can't you be more like your sister? Look, since she studied so well in the International school you also go to," Emphasis on the also, "She got accelerated a couple of times and is finally in college! And she finally has a job! She makes moneyâ€¦" Manifestly, Karla bragged about the adoptive daughter she didn't regret to house years ago as if she weren't even there. Even so, Mikasa just wore that plain, expression-less face of hers, but surely, Karla still felt the gratitude.

As aforementioned, as carefree as Eren could go, he didn't even care and he couldn't even care less of get a dent of jealousy and hurt on his pad of emotions. Nope, sir. He didn't care about that. He loved his sister since she was always there for him from the start. "So you want me to earn money, mom?"

"Heck, I would be grateful if you earn from your tardy slips, poor grades, bad reputation and delinquent like features, Eren." She gave her son the sassy look. Like mother, like son. "The prices in the grocery just keep on going up. Good thing your sister is helping us with the budget. But do we deprive her of her cash? No, sireeh."

Mikasa stood up, bowed her head to signify her thankfulness towards the foodâ€¦being ostensibly polite as she isâ€¦as Eren merely rolled his eyes and let out a deep sigh. "Is this really just about money?!"

Karla gasped. "No young man, this is about your studies and your future. You don't have to be a carbon copy of your sister but weâ€"your father and Iâ€"always wanted to secure your future. Now, help yourself!"

Since Mikasa couldn't take the noise, she finally decided to go upstairs to her room to continue her packing for her work later thirty minutes from now. And, it seems that it would be a long trip to the office today since she heard that the subway was jam-packed with people.

As usual, when she was done with her rituals before work in the morning, she would go meet-up with Jean, an old classmate she had when she was still in World Academy, the international school where Eren dwells currently by a train station. He is awfully older than her as aforesaid that she was accelerated. A Fact? She was accelerated to the next level almost eight times already in her stay at W.A. She already left her original batch mates when she was in the third grade, her initial batch, the junior batch just under Eren and the seniors.

Fortunately, the two-toned coffee-haired foreigner, also known as Jean to Mikasa, arrived earlier than her a bit which led Mikasa to a parade of apologies. Aha, unfortunately for the race-confused man that has an obvious unrequited love for her, she kept the physical contact throughout the train ride, making his cheeks almost permanently scarlet. If you compare the two, Jean, being in the eighth grade when Mikasa left the third grade for the next year level, Mikasa would stand out as the more mature one between them.

The pair made their way through the flights of stairs that welcomed them as soon as they entered the commercialized building in the heart of Tokyo. Awkwardly for Mikasa, she doesn't even know what the company she is applied in does anyway. All she knows is that the company practically ripped off their name from her retained surname: 'Ackerman.' Apparently, since she's a new employeeâ€"she applied last monthâ€"co-workers kept gossiping and speaking rumours about her being accepted for the job just because of her relations to the owners. Hell, she didn't even know them. Jean was one of these people who liked bringing up the discussion. Or maybe he just wanted a close to never ending small talk with the love of his lifeâ€|

"Say, Mikasa, you sure you are not at all related to our bossâ€|like at all?! I mean, it would be awkward for me to casually speak like this to the daughter of the president, y'know." He said, nudging the raven head, both of them, handing the rails of the stairs, only a quarter done.

She stopped on the second step of the fifth flight of stairs and locked her eyes on his. "Like I told you, I've never even met the president yet."

They continued climbing the mountain of stairs.

"But you're adopted!"

As she wanted to butt out a deadpan, she almost laughed. "So? You see the Finance Head, Erwin Smith lurking around with the other employees with the last name of Smith. And, he's not related to either one of

them!" Jean had to agree. That Erwin guy had a really common last name anywayâ€|But is Ackerman common?

The glint in the two-toned man's eyes vanished when he realized which floor they were finally in. "Hey, this is my floor. Thanks for the talk Mikasa. Bye, see you tomorrow?" He had to depart from her again. Sad lifeâ€|

"Yeah. Bye."

After bidding their not so warm goodbyes, Mikasa proceeded up north. It was such a problem. The fact that she gets direct orders from the president's son who has his office on the topmost floor was a big drag. Like, after lunch she would get hungry again after climbing the endless staircase.

Black pumps meet a flat carpeted floor as she reached her destination. She also had to fix her tight aquamarine pencil skirt that barely reached mid-thigh as she checked into her centre. '_Gosh, why does Karla even buy me skimpy clothes like thisâ€|?'_ Her thoughts were rather clear.

She had her own desk full of papers and books on business inside of the president's son's room. Only a medium-sized shelf full of unnecessary trinkets and weird books served as a blockage and a good thing to her. She didn't like talking to her bosses' son at all. Mikasa also didn't like the fact that most co-workers would stare at with malice. Why? It was because others only label her as a child in a world of mature adults there. As mature as she can be, in reality, Mikasa Ackerman, a senior in her college year, is a sixteen year old girl that is studying linguistics in her college under a 'part-time student' program. One of the reasons that she got accepted to this company was not because of her surname but because of her outstanding and unbelievable academic background. And also, the fact that she can't procrastinate for her life added up in the process. The Ackerman Corporation needed more people like thatâ€|"especially now that they've expanded their land to Germany, Italy, Switzerland and America. Not to mention the fact that the Ackermans own a big branch of W.A. and most of their employees are from there, thus, having more foreigners than Japanese personnel in their branches here in Japan. Mikasa was such an extravagant controversy that the CEO himself helped her renew some papers to doctor her age. It sure was dirty work; however they were glad they kept the girl.

Not only was Mikasa Ackerman a brainy-act, but also she was a deity of the millennium in the aspects of beauty and grace. When she first joined the Ackerman Corporation, her hair length was just above her flat chest. (_Many suitors that also work in her department often say that her slender figure, sex appeal and golden behind made up for absence of the two mountains supposedly in front of her._) It was confirmed that the raven head's best feature was her long charcoal-coloured hair that was rather smooth and silky. Her face was also a heavy weight in her beauty. Her eyes were like steel and silver, yet they were soft as long lashes decorated them. Lips of a light cerise shade also attract the eyes of numerous men in the company, young, old, sometimes even the investors and other people from other companies just going there to hit on her, using 'business reasons' and 'work' as an excuse. The Caucasian beautyâ€|no one knew she was biracial actuallyâ€|already knew how to handle these kinds of things. Flirting was a thing she despised. Her social life was always

blank.

Mikasa breathed in, tightened her grip on her sling bag and entered the room. Not one "good morning" welcomed her.

Sitting on a chair in front of a long desk beside her part of the room, was her superior, the one and only heir to the Ackerman Corporation, Levi Rivaille Ackerman. The two are alike in similar waysâ€|however; they are also dissimilar in unlikely ways. Other than the surname, Levi also had that sex appeal that got the girls in the building always wanting to come to his office. They make random irrelevant complaints just to talk to himâ€|others straightforwardly confess. Maybe this was one of the reasons why she is also judged unfairly among the staff. Who's not going to get jealous when you work rather close to a man with dangerous eyes of a potential devil in bed? At least, that's what the girl gossip says. Truthfully though, these rumours are merely exaggerated fantasies of unnoticed girls who loathe the sight of Mikasa Ackerman. In harmonious reality, Levi Ackerman is even much older than Jean. He has jet black hair with bangs that part in the centre, an undercut and a white cravat as his trademark. Too, out of fatigue, Levi Ackerman has lines under his eyes and sometimes it would be evident that he didn't had a good night as black under eyes can tell a lot of stories.

Mikasa didn't bother to say good morning, after all. She just continued to walk swiftly to her seat and started filing the piled up unaccomplished papers from yesterday. Apparently, Mikasa broke her vow of accomplishing all her work yesterday when she suddenly felt ill towards night time, got humiliated in front of the boastful Levi, and was sent home by Hanji, her other superior for rest. She's bound to finish it today, though.

"A new set of proposals were given to me. I would like you to finish your unfinished work yesterday and that." Levi said sharply, not even looking at her. "Also, make sure to type out my replies and consents in the fourteen languages that are essential. I want every single one processed like that by the end of the day. All of these are supposed to be submitted to the foreign investors at the end of the day. Clear?"

Mikasa merely nodded. She had no time to emit respectful words to a boss like that. She doesn't know why but her blood just boils whenever he talks to her. It just pisses her off from time to time. She can't even stand the sight of him. His voice was the worst part. It was crisp, and clear, and authoritative. Mikasa was a rebel. She hated being commanded by people she did not trust. But there was something about his voiceâ€|that made her intimidated.

Immediately going back to paperwork, Mikasa, being all silent, vigorous typing sounds of Levi on his laptop kept on bugging her. It was the only thing other the ticking of the wall clock disturbing her. She wanted pure silence. Of course she can't just go tell her superior about what she feels about being bothered. He too was also immersed in the thing he was doing. Whatever it wasâ€|

â€|Eren Jaegerâ€|

After the whole day of studying and interacting with different people, Eren Jaeger, an average-looking boy with rather dark brown hair and spring green orbs waited outside of his best friend's

classroom, Armin. The moment he was dismissed from his last period, chemistry, he rushed away to the other building to just see Armin Arlert, a British born German. The two have been friends since the first grade and even though Armin had a really high IQ that can even beat Mikasa off the charts, he decided to not level up and stay with his old pals. That was how humble he was. Having a petite frame and his blonde hair, just below his ear, you can say he looks like a girl, as some of his classmates say. But other people beg to differ.

The bell rang from inside the classroom and all the students cheered, ignoring the last few remarks of the teacher who was still standing beside the chalkboard.

It wasn't really hard to track down the blonde with a round nose since he went out of the crowd and practically jumped onto Eren. "Heeey!" Armin started.

Eren pushed him off and patted his shirt. "Dude, why are you so jumpy today? Is there good news?"

Armin looked like he was about to hyperventilate as his cheeks grew red and some cat's got his tongue. Armin tightened his grip on the straps of his backpack and said, "My favourite gaming company just released a new game! I've wanted to play that RPG since the day they released the trailer last fall, bro."

Eren's eyes widened. "A new game you say?" He was sick of the old video game he was playing for the last thirteen years. Other than technology's big leap, the game he played never got updates since the last update over five years ago. Eren does not know why he even keeps up with it.

Armin smiled. "Yeah, a new RPG. We can play it at the internet caf   if you want. It's free online for the first ten days."

Eren thought it was fair. If Armin said it was nice, and then maybe it is nice. Armin Arlert never lies. He is the good two shoes of the batch, and a wimp. He was a pansy, a coward. There was nothing manly about Armin Arlert. You can't write the word 'manly' in bold and just put his name under it. Armin was an effeminate man. He was gentle. He thought about things too much. He applies his critical thinking in games, puzzles, and mysteries. And some think that he's gay for Eren Jaeger, which is partially not true.

"I'm interested. Keep talking."

So they went in the internet caf   just across the gates of World Academy after class.

The fresh smell of tomfoolery filled the air conditioned room. It tickled the pair's noses. There were computers lined up in columns. Posters adorned the dark green walls of the confinement, promoting new games. And Eren saw the promotional poster of the game Armin was talking about.

The poster color palette merely ranged from brown to green. It wasn't eye catching because of its lack in color, it was eye catching and captivating because of the art design. It looked historical and realistic. It appeared as if it happened in real life. In the middle

of the poster was a young girl who looked around nine or ten. She had porcelain skin (as expected from a game character) and perfectly messy black hair that reached her chest. Her eyes were glistening through the poster as they were the color of almonds. And, a red scarf covered half her face. Her nose and lips are covered, but she seemed to be Japanese.

Eren rubbed his eyes and his hands. Did it seem colder than usual inside the caf  ? He blinked twice before looking at the picture again. He felt nostalgic. The poster left him a nostalgic feeling that he didn't understand. It left a knot in his stomach.

Beside the girl was a young man, with a valiant demeanor. He wore an ash brown jacket that was swarming with medals and badges that he was from an upper crop of the military, over a white buttoned shirt, and a blood tainted cravat. It was too stained that the real color of the cravat was not seen. It did not look like his blood but maybe it was the blood from the naked genital-less people that seemed exceptionally gigantic behind them that were behind the wall behind them. Eren's eyes drifted from the man's face to behind the wall, to the blade and gear the man was carrying. Damn, the game looks good. He had hair color same as the girl's. His hair was short, and his bangs parted right in the middle which gave him that neurotic clean freak look. He had Asian-like eyes but his nose looked so foreign. His lips were a light purple as if he was cold. His eyebrows were permanently drawn toward each other. He looked mad, thirsty for revenge. Numerous leather belts connected themselves along his small framed body and ended where his dark brown knee high boots started. His eyes were full of disgust and revenge as blood covered his body. Every curve and point of his face was precise and perfect. It was perfection. This man was basically a sculpture from Renaissance, Eren concluded. Looking too ideal, Eren cringed. What was he thinking? He felt a strange attraction to the young male character. He wasn't gay. But he can say that if he was a girl, she was someone Eren would like to date.

He read the kanji which was its title.

Eren Jaeger sucked at Japanese because his school and ways of living didn't demand him to speak the language but he tried to do so.

"Shingeki no  |" Eren struggled at the big, bold and bloody lettering. "Armin, how do you pronounce this?" He pointed at the characters he can't understand.

"It says Shingeki no Kyojin." He looked at Eren.

Eren looked at him.

"Shit man, I can't understand ching chong."

Armin sighed. "What do you want me to do?"

"Uh, translate it for me."

A moment and a half of staring at the poster like the idiots that they are were passed.

"It means Attack on Titan." Armin finally answered with a hint of

annoyance because of Eren's stupidity and limits in the Japanese language despite living in Japan for over thirteen years already. "Shingeki no Kyojin means Attack on Titan."

They made their way through the room to the computer labeled '1' at the end of the room. It was their favorite computer because it caught more signal than the others. Eren took '2'.

"So the titans are those naked monsters?"

Armin started surfing the net, getting the link to the server of the game in their town. "You can't really call them monsters, Eren. They're still people."

"But they don't have genitals. Fuck, even animals have genitals. What are they? How do they reproduce?"

Armin sighed and rolls his eyes at his curious friend. "I have only read the synopsis, and have yet to try the game." He pointed at the character customization he was going through.

"I suggest playing with me while I'm at it." Armin added.

And so, Eren searched the link, got into the server, made his account and started with the character customization. To his surprise, just like the promotional poster, the customization settings were also detailed. All the settings for the character's body frame and face were detailed and realistic. His expectations were followed. It looked like a human copying app. Every face was so ****lifelike**** and probable to exist. The human brain does not create faces. One way or another, they've seen people like this. The programmers must have done tons of research for the customization only.

"The customization choices are so amazing. They vary..." Armin started, awfully immersed in creating his persona. "Finally, there's a game that's not racist or influenced my westernization or based Eurocentric concepts for once."

"Yeah." Eren was speechless everything seemed so epically fictional. He didn't know what Armin was talking about. And, he could care less. He was just in awe the whole time.

"Check my character out!" Armin says while gripping the sleeve of Eren's uniform.

From his own computer monitor, Eren darted his eyes over at Armin's. His jaw dropped at the sight. "Jesus Christ!" Eren screamed. Armin perfectly made his persona look exactly like him. From the stubby nose to the girly blonde locks and the cerulean eyes full of wonder the small forehead it was accurate! "The programmers are awesome! No, you are awesome!"

Armin clapped for himself because of Eren's genuine praise. "How your's going?"

Before Eren could even cover the embarrassing masterpiece on his screen, Armin already caught a big glimpse of it. "It looks like your mom."

"I know right. That's the point. I want her to get eaten by these

titansâ€|you call them."

Armin got truthfully disturbed at the thought. His eyebrows met, and he faced Eren with a serious face. "Don't joke about it. If they're real would you let your mom get eaten?"

"It's just a game dude, chill."

"I still encourage you to customize it based on how you look. You'll have more chances of winning, said the producers. It's like seeing yourself in a dreamâ€|in another world. And of course, you wouldn't want to get eaten right?" Armin made sense. And so, Eren gave in and turned his character into himself.

It was six o'clock in the evening when the two friends stopped playing. Despite the game being addictive, the two ran out of pocket money to pay. They were outside. Grey skies embarked on a journeyâ€|Night was settling near. The autumn leaves rustled as the two friends took a last look at the Shingeki no Kyojin promotional poster from outside. The nostalgia settled in deep into Eren's thoughts once again.

"The concept was cool! I can't wait to make a review about it. Of course I can't make a definite walkthroughâ€|.haha." Armin kept on rambling on how the game was awesome.

Shingeki no Kyojin tells how humans live in walls and are at the brink of eternal extinction. You can play as a titan or as a hero. And, you can play live with other characters online. The thrill of survivalâ€|the belief of killing or getting killed elated Armin and Eren. For a long time, the boys looked for a game drug. And now they've seen the most addictive drug of them all. When you start playing, you enter a time space wherein everything is possible. You forget about the real worldâ€|and the world within your mind eats you alive. That is what happened to the two after an intense 2-hour session of playing. They would have pulled an all-nighter if they actually owned the internet cafÃ©.

Armin snapped. "Eren, are you listening?"

"Uhâ€|I'm sorry. I got disturbed." Eren scratched his head.

"What's the matter?" Armin probed.

He observed how Eren's eyes were fixated on the poster with a serious expression. This unlocks Armin's curiosity. "You've been looking at thatâ€|since forever,"

Eren puts a hand on the transparent glass. "This poster looks too real."

"Yeah, Computer Generatedâ€|" "

"No, Armin," Eren corrected him. "Not that. I mean, this girlâ€|it's like I've seen her before." Eren squinted his eyes as he took a closer look at the face of the girlâ€|the face of pure innocenceâ€|haunting your soul. She was scared. She was scarred. Something diabolic must have happened. The girl character was not even in the introduction either. She just looked like a background. However, there was something in her wildly pure eyes that intrigued

Eren so much. It made him think of

"It looks like a mini Mikasa. I remember! She looks like this back when we were in fourth grade. I believe she was grade three?" And when Armin mentioned it, suddenly Eren hit a realization.

"She looked exactly like this during that time in the police station"

He reminisced that day that day he first laid eyes on Mikasa.

-Flashback-

During the summer after Eren's second grade, Grish Jaeger, his father, was often sent to different places in Japan as his position at his job was demanding certain circumstances. He was a policeman and Karla can't do anything about that fact. _

They believe this daily repositioning of due to a human trafficking incident that was reported to the officials after an underground yakuza issue exploded. _

And when Grisha returned, he came back with an extremely petite child of Japanese and European decent. She looked malnourished as her bones were protruding through her fair skin. She didn't look taken care of. Soon this child's background was unfolded in the Jaeger household. Mikasa Ackerman was part of a Eurasian clan that owed a fortune and a half to the yakuza. And her father failed to pay their debts. And so, the big yakuza boss ordered some men to take away all the women and children of the said clan and sell them off to other countries. Mikasa was one of them, only eight during that time. And the child witnessed the blood-curdling scene of her mother getting killed. She was the last survivor. And she was saved by Grisha and his men. _

Eren still remembered what she wore that day. A dirty, crumpled satin dress that had ripped parts from the bottom A thin baby pink jacket that passed her waist A ragged red scarf _

Armin's answer brought him back from his mind. "That's just a coincidence."

Eren swallowed air. "I guess."

The two friends parted ways in the train station. And, Eren was left with a wide eye of curiosity and a big interest in the said game.

*TO BE CONTINUED...*

3. Guilty Pleasure

Chapter 2: Guilty Pleasure

"Eren Jaeger"

When Saturday came, Eren felt a slight change in his sudden gaming routine with Armin. Since that faithful Wednesday, their routine was

always: Wake up. End School. Play Games. And when he woke up very late that day, he was just in time for lunch. It wasn't an ordinary day for him. His system needs the daily drug, his required dosage of playing Shingeki for two hours. And his head was hurting. His vision was blurry as he sat down at the dining room, facing Mikasa who was laying down the placemats, getting ready for lunch.

"Where are mom and dad?" Eren finally talked after consecutive yawns. He was sleepy due to his never ending argument with Annie Leonhart until two in the morning last Friday night which started as a debate on their classes' role in the upcoming festival. It ended as a personal conversation though. Too personalâ€|

Mikasa sat down on the cushion and passed a bowl of rice towards Eren. "They had to buy cleaning supplies."

Eren thinks otherwise. "Together?" He receives his bowl warmly as his stomach grumbles quite loudly. "I bet they're on a date."

Mikasa splits her wooden chopsticks. "It's too early."

After thanking the supreme ruler up there for their food, the not blood-related siblings started eating the food prepared on the table. This time it was Mikasa who cooked. She was taught by Karla to cook basic house dishes at the age of thirteen since the mother thought that when Mikasa grew more, maybe she'd want to live independently. At least, she knows how to cook. But until now, years since that faithful day she was rescued by the police, Mikasa never wanted to part ways with this German family of three.

The perfect wife materialâ€|as mentioned by Jean during his frequent visitsâ€|prepared roasted pork chops for lunch. And since Eren just woke up, it seems that he has to eat this for brunch, even though his stomach is not prepared for rice so early in the morning.

Eren picks at his food despite being physically hungry. "Don't you have class today?" He refuses to eat, and so he uses his casual sense of conversation to distract his sister who at times acts like Karla, to the point that Eren feels as if Mikasa was his motherâ€|since she frequently scolds himâ€|even though he is one whole year olderâ€|which was very weird as they're mutual friend say. Mikasa was the younger but she was the more successful and the one who wins in maturity.

Mikasa blows the hot meat at the end of her chopsticks. "I'll be taking remedial classes."

"Why? Is there something wrong? Are you sick? Is it your time of the month? Mikasa spit it out!" Eren flooded the raven head with questions out of boredom. Whenever it's just them eating together the atmosphere was always silent. Mikasa doesn't have much anything to say. She eats. She rises. She goes. But when Karla's around, the dining room was lively with rants and ramblings, reminders and pointers for Eren, and only Eren, because he was the failure in the family.

"Have you forgotten, Eren? Mom and dad got called to school because of you. Remember the Parent Teacher Conference that Ms. Hanji demanded?" Mikasa raised a brow at him. "It's today, at 2."

Eren remembered and he was startledâ€”startled enough to work his chopsticks very fast to eat his food. He picked a piece of meat up, swallowed it without chewing and stuffed the cheeks of his mouth with rice, rice, and rice! He stress eats when he knows he's in trouble or there was something bothering him.

"Eren!"

Bits of white rice started flying over the place when he started opening his mouth. "You're going to the Conference instead?!"

It was hell indeed. If Karla goes on ranting like a sailor, Grisha goes on, on how disappointed he isâ€”Mikasa was the opposite of all that. She'd be giving him the look of shame and the silent treatment. And it was the worst punishment of all, coming from his little sister. The teachers know her and they might compare her to him again.

"I'm forbidding you to hang out with Armin in the internet cafÃ© after school." Mikasa wasn't even looking at him. It's like she had a script somewhere hiding in her food. Oh and how did she know that?

Before Eren could swallow all the chunks of food he stuffed in his mouth and say a rather sassy comeback, Mikasa was one step ahead of him. "I have eyes everywhere."

"You can't stop me from playing,"

"Yes, I can."

"No you can't." Eren thinks of something smart to say. "I'm older than you."

Mikasa anticipated this and already recorded a comeback in her head. "I'm in charge. Mom says I'm in charge." She wasn't cocky or arrogant. Actually, she still wore her plain serious face, the one without any emotion. It was the face that intimidated Eren. It's a hard wall to climb. It's higher than the 50 meter walls in Shingeki no Kyojin, Eren thought.

"But, sis!"

"No butts until you give me a good reason why I should let you diddle dawdle after school and not focus on your studies."

This silenced Eren. He knew she was smart and responsible. But convincing Mikasa was the easiest thing to do. And to gain support from her, he had to exercise all his strength. He knew just the thing to do.

"I need to play Shingeki. It's my life now." He didn't let his shrewdness out. He cried out, genuinely. He was a gamer in need of support, of care.

"It's just a game. Life is different." Mikasa stands up and puts her dish on the washing area of the kitchen. "Reality check! If you don't graduate high school how are you going to get a stable job? By just playing some game that can actually danger your life!" Now her tone was serious as hell. Her frail voice was rising. Truly, she was

concerned about the future and the well-being of her foster brother.

"Danger? Dude, the naked giants can't just jump out of the screen and eat my face off! What the danger in that?"

"Other than sleep paralysis due to a nightmare, the people you play with can be a threat. You don't know who the others are. They might be criminals who will use you to their advantage. You don't know this online companionship."

"I use the local server. Besides, you can try playing if you want."

Mikasa found this a very convincing act. She wanted to test out this game. She wanted to not because she still finds time to play childish things, but because she needed to. She wants to protect her brother and she's willing to put herself out there to prove that it's dangerous to trust.

"Deal,"

“Mikasa Ackerman”

Mikasa was getting out of a cab she took from the train station to their house after her afternoon appointment with Eren's adviser, Hanji Zoe—who also holds a high position in the Ackerman Corporation. The talk was short. Hanji straightforwardly mentioned Eren's usual antics during class, during break time, and after class hours within the school premises which were inappropriate. His tardy record was also another story. Though, the talk about Eren was not the reason why she took long in Hanji's office. They bump into each other from time to time in the office.

Mikasa nodded and understood the racket Eren has done throughout the semester. "He really hasn't change throughout his years in this school, huh?" She sighs. "I'm truly sorry for my brother. Thank you for notifying us." Mikasa was about to stand and leave when Hanji grabbed her by the wrist. _

_ "Hey," Hanji pouts. "I was expecting for Grisha and Karla to come so I thought this appointment would end soon. But, it's you!" Mikasa has memorized the phrase Hanji was about to say. She'd always say this every time they meet unexpectedly. _

_ "It's me, you favorite student?" Mikasa continuous Hanji's unfinished sentence, poker-faced. _

Hanji claps her hands. "Yes, my favorite student! I remember you being the top of your class when I taught you. Everybody else failed!" _

_ "But I didn't?" She knew her former teacher too well. _

Hanji punched the air upward using her right hand with a bright smile on her face. "Yeah!" _

Mikasa was about to turn to leave but Hanji dashes from behind her desk to block the raven-head's way. _

_ "___Waitâ€¦| let's talk first."_

Mikasa sighs. "About what, Ms. Zoe?"

_Hanji pouts again. "Aw, don't call me that. We're workmates. Call me by my first name. And, I always wanted to talk to you about work. I mean, you're close with Levi. He's my little brother, literally, and I haven't been around the office lately to see what he's up to." Hanji Zoe was the adopted child of Levi Ackerman's father. She was older and more ambitious. The only thing that kept Hanji from inheriting the corporation in the future was her immense love for learning and teaching. Their father gave her W.A. as a birthday present. _

_ "___Hanji, we're not close." Mikasa corrected, a frown forming on her lips. She'd always ask why people think they're close. "I only work close to him. He doesn't even talk to me unless he needs to scold me for messing something up or give orders."_

_ "___Well I just want you to observe him, okay? I heard he's always on his laptop or pc." Hanji frowned too, concerned. "Levi is getting ignorant. I also heard him type nonstop during midnight." _

_ "___I'm sorry but his personal life does not concern me." Mikasa abruptly exclaimed, pushing through Hanji and leaving the room.

_

_She hated the midget with all her heart. _

_She's used to the spotlight and the recognition without being prideful, but Levi Ackerman was the only person who made her feel so low. _

Mikasa doesn't bother to get her house key and merely presses the doorbell outside of their gate before going in. she stood by the door, patiently waiting for her mischievous brother to answer it. After a few minutes of silence from within, she knocks.

Not a soul to be found.

She knocks again, this time, with force applied on the wooden door.

Eren does not answer.

She was already pissed because of the Levi-talk and now Eren was being a brat again. She takes out her key, opens the door, goes upstairs with the inhuman speed she acquires when she's mad and knocks the hell out of Eren's door.

Surprisingly, the green door was open.

She does not hesitate to open it fully despite the handwritten sign hanging on the door, _Do not Disturb_, only to see Eren on his bed fiddling with her laptop again.

He lay on his belly as her laptop was placed at the foot of the bed. Gigantic grey headphones were placed on his head, connected the laptop.

"So this is why you didn't open the door for me?!" Mikasa intended to modulate her voice making it sound stern yet calm; instead it came out as a scream. She was boiling with irritation, her veins were popping. Her eyebrows were twitching and her lips were quivering with anger. It was a moment she showed most emotion.

The brunet heard her muffled voice through the think headphones. When he turned to face her, he yelped in shock, taking off his headphones and throwing them away. "M-Mikasaâ€¦I didn't think you'd be home so soon!" It looks like his attempts to change the subject failed when Mikasa kicked a part of the wall.

"I went home from a meeting with your adviser on how you perform in school! And I go home, tired, with no one to open the door. And you're just here, playing?!"

Eren shifted nervously on his bed. "Wellâ€¦I didn't hear youâ€¦"

Mikasa unplugged his headphones from her laptop and snatched everything away from the brunet's grasp. "Yeah, and you shouldn't have been messing with someone else's laptop without their permission!" After that, she stormed out of the room with the laptop with Eren's unfinished game inside of it.

Mikasa went in her room which was a bathroom away from Eren's and locked the door in frustration. She did not want to talk to anyone as of the moment. "Damnâ€¦" She set her laptop on her study desk and purposely fell on her queen-sized bed. "I shouldn't have shouted Eren like that." Guilt was eating her.

Eren was an unpleasant child while growing up but he was still older than her. He was the older brother she always looked up to. When she was bullied about being adopted during their elementary days, he'd always be there to beat up those bad bullies and Mikasa would laugh at their pain. She shouldn't have done that.

Standing up, she proceeded to her desk, sat on the wooden stool under it and opened her laptop to see if he messed up some files about work or school. "But I can't believe I wasted one day of class for that."

All her files were present. There were no corrupted documents whatsoever. The only thing suspicious was the incognito tab in her web browser. "What's this?" Without hesitation, Mikasa opened Eren's live game, a new world waiting for her.

She never knew that, that would be the last normal day of her life.

_Mikasa glided in the air from the rooftops of the ruins of Shiganshina with ease, lots of air releasing from her gas tank. _A notice appeared on the upper left portion of the screen. _15-meter class, spotted. _

_It was an abnormal titan coming her way at a fast pace. Mikasa ran on the brown rooftop then took hold of a tall pole with her maneuver gear, swinging towards the titan. She catches it by the neck then punctures both of her sharpened swords deeply into its nape. Two big cuts appear and then bright red liquid realistically oozes out the

wounds. The titan turns into fine dust and vanishes completely.

—

The words 'TOP NEW SCORE' appeared on the screen in bold golden letters. It was the fourteenth time Mikasa broke her record tonight. She started playing in Eren's account around 4pm.

Eventually after being curious she got engrossed in the game. From the graphics, to the story plotline everything was so surreal to her. It was also fascinating that the customizations of characters were so intricate that they can possibly be real people.

After winning Eren's _AngryGermanKid_ character a few awards, she created her own account and started playing in the same server. After one hour of scouting, she forced herself to let the next one be the last time she scouts for the night. But, when she gets too comfortable in her cushioned stool, she loses track of her scouts and scores.

"Noooooooo!" She shouts at her laptop as another player advanced in front of her character, attempt killing a 17-meter class titan in their lane.

Unfortunately, the caramel-haired character named, _Hana-Banana_, got caught in the titan's grasp and was soon eaten fully.

Mikasa smirked at her comrade's slip up as she took the opportunity to slay the monster since it was distracted with the taste and the sight of blood. The moment the titan vanished, the air around it turned into coins which Mikasa collected.

This happened match after match. She did not move from her seat. The only breaks she took were for dinner and when she had to go to the bathroom. Somehow the concept of winning pushed her to stay up all night.

Mikasa Ackerman found a whole new world.

**TO BE CONTINUED...**

4. Humanity's Strongest Player

Chapter 3: Humanity's Strongest Player

â€"Mikasa Ackermanâ€"

Mikasa has been playing _Shingeki no Kyojin_ for a week now. Playing the famous RPG unexpectedly did not affect her studies and her work negatively as she feared it would. Instead, it took a big toll on the wonderful progression of her work and her grades positively. Naturally she would not have free time to burn in a regular day. However, ever since this she tasted a fragment of this powerful drug, she got addicted and did the impossible. She made time for her hobby from scratch.

She would wake up early in the morning to play just before she headed to school to take her classes that often changed schedule. She'd go online again when she had a free period. Somehow, the classes and her thirst for victory did not overlap. The grades were

maintained.

After a short time in her classes, she'd go over to the office wherein she was only required to stay for a couple of hours on a regular day. She would bring her laptop around the office to play when she has time which rarely happens because Levi kept her busy indeed while he was busy fiddling with his pc.

At the end of the day, when she got home she'd play all night after all obligations and responsibilities were done. Everything was at a good pace. Everything was well-balanced in young Mikasa's life. There was nothing impossible for Mikasa Ackerman and the burning passion she feels after a successful scout.

Until one day in the officeâ€¦

It was lunch break in the main building of the Ackerman Corporation settled in the heart of Tokyo's industrialized commercial area. Mikasa has just arrived the building with neat clothes which consisted of closed caramel stilettos, a black comfortable lacey pencil skirt that seemed longer than any of what Karla bought her, and a mauve blouse under a dark-colored blazer. What she wore in the office often made her look professional and older for her age. Today, she also bothered to put on light makeup as her cheeks were tinted baby pink and her long eyelashes were pushed up by miraculous mascara.

Mikasa made her way through the hectic people skating along the lobby from different sectors and departments, scrambling to meet deadlines. With her black laptop bag in hand and the bag Karla gifted her in the other, she swiftly made her way into the marketing department of the building where Jean would usually be at, at this time, to join some friends for lunch.

She gazed at the many tiny open offices in the room, looking for Jean only to see him hanging out with Marco Bodt, the Marketing Head. They were having coffee.

He was tanned, robust, and unbelievably cute for a six-footer. Marco was around the same age as Jean though he had more successes in his life and career. He was meek and humble. He was one of those gentle giant bosses around the office which were rare to find.

Jean and he were chatting away with cheap coffee in cheap paper cups from the vending machine when Mikasa approached them.

Lover boy was the first to notice. "Hey Mikasa! Care to join us for coffee?" He was squirming tensely in his position, trying not to get lost in her eyes.

Mikasa nodded. "Sure. I haven't eaten yet. I just got here."

Marco smiled it was his first time meeting her, though she need not an introduction for him. He was aware who the Eurasian beauty was. "So, this is the legendary Mikasa Ackerman I've been hearing from you, Jean?" He eyed Jean with a small suggestive grin.

Jean grew red.

"Oh but it's not only from him that I've heard about you." Marco

added. He stood up from his seat and fixed his eyes on her. "The higher-ups tell me you're an efficient worker and a responsible student."

Mikasa suddenly felt ill. _The higher-ups?_ She hated being overly-praised. It makes her co-workers' standards of her high, too high for her to reach. And some of them end up distrusting her, trash-talking her, and shunning her because of such commendations. In the industry, the crab system wasn't rare. It happens all the time. This is a daily occurrence in the Ackerman Corporation.

"Uhm thank you. I believe it's the first time we've met, Sir Bodt."

Marco pouted. "Oh don't call me 'Sir'! We're probably the same age."

Mikasa looked at Jean. Jean returned the stare.

Jean intervened. "She's kind of young, Marco."

Marco's smile grew. Every time he spoke, the freckles on his cheeks moved. "Young, huh? And really beautiful. Mikasa, dear, are you some kind of model?"

"I'm n-not..."

Marco chuckled. "Then where did you come from?! Gosh, someone as attractive as you should be in the marketing department _under me_. You do know we need to attract as many customersâ€|"

Jean leaned forward and laid a hand on Marco's right shoulder with his free hand, trying to hold back the irritation he's feeling. "I'm going to say it again, Marco. She's kind of young." The French man tried his best to hold back the cussing.

Light eyes met dark ones as both men understood the situation. The only one who could not read the atmosphere was Mikasa.

Marco slowly backed away, his eyes, still on Mikasa. "Well, you can always join us. Bye, for now."

Mikasa gulped air harshly. She did not expect someone as Angelic as Marco Bodt to be quite menacing and flirty.

"You okay?"

Mikasa beamed at Jean. "Thanks,"

Jean smiled and took her the elbow. "Now let's go get some lunch, ok?"

Mikasa twirled the soggy noodles of her spaghetti in frustration. "Are you sure it was okay? I mean, Marco's in a pretty high position right? You might get bullied again 'cause of me." She was still dwelling on what happened in the marketing department. "It has already happened in the past. It can happen again." She reminded the poker-faced man who was too busy paying attention to his sandwich.

Jean chomped down the last of his chicken sandwich in one swoop, talking with his mouth full. "Yeah but it is Marco. We went to WA together in the second grade."

"He's still higher than us. He might do something."

Jean yawned. "Nah, he wouldn't do that. He's a nice person. He's a fuck-boy, but nice."

Mikasa paused and stared down at her food. She remembered the time Jean almost lost his job for punching a co-worker that violated her in some way. "How do you know?"

He looked at the ceiling then at her. Somehow, the answer was above them. "We were friends till the fifth grade. He was gay for me in the eighth grade. There was no other person I knew too tell other than Marco Bodt."

At some point, Mikasa laughed and laughed her heart out in front of the food. It was one of these times wherein her emotions would show up, meaning that she was still human. It was usual for Mikasa and the people around her to not see her emotions. She wore a plain face always. It wasn't because she had a problem expressing. But, most of the time she felt empty. Like, there was something missing in her soul. There was a piece of her she hasn't found yet or she wasn't aware of. It'd be lucky to see her crack under frustration and cry or get pissed or laugh, letting others hear her angelic laugh. It would make her look more human. Other people would think she's an emotionless doll with a pretty plastic face. Mikasa is happy when she's aware she's showing some feelings. She is happy when she's aware that she's human.

After lunch, Mikasa was forced to sit in an enormous room across from Levi with only some furniture and books on shelves covering her. That was her job, to stay by Levi and organize all his appointments and issues. It was real bad luck that the higher-ups redesigned his office. Now she can't escape his glare. Moreover, she can't work well with him staring from time to time.

Mikasa reviewed and retyped numerous documents Levi created for various company purposes, scrolling through them one by one without error. She filed and encased them in folders. She typed and typed and reprinted. It was handy that they finally positioned the printer near her desk.

On a normal day, the room would be silent and no one would acknowledge each other's presence, not even a stare given.

But now it was different. Mikasa would beam at her boss to see what he was doing. And she'd catch him staring at her. His eyes were as sharp as ever for when she catches him. He averts his gaze abruptly back to his pc. _"Oh. And his pc."_

Mikasa has been dreading the noisy sound of bony fingers hitting the keyboard harshly and snappy mouse clicks since last week. Levi won't stop working on his pc. He types and clicks all the way, and looks astonished sometimes when he pauses to stare at his pc.

"Is he scrolling through porn sites or something?" The thought made her feel uneasy on her seat since he would always look at her.

She shook her head, getting rid of the nasty thought and buried herself in the documents needed to be translated. Mikasa was about to open a new file sent from email when the vigorous typing from the other end of the room ceased.

"Mikasa?"

She grew cold. "Y-yes?" She snapped her head up.

"Take a break."

What did he just say? Her eyes widened at the words that just escaped his mouth. It was a phrase that the bossy little imp never said before.

"Why?"

Levi looked at her in the eye from across the room. "That's an order. I don't want any of my employees getting sick again. The deadlines are pretty near." There was no compassion or concern in his voice or his eyes. He's still deadpan. The words flowing out were complete opposites of what his nonchalant expression said.

She rather not probe further for his sudden change of attitude and stood up walking towards the door with her laptop in her hand. It was a once in a blue moon chance. Mikasa planned to go play in the lobby.

A stern voice stopped her though. "I didn't give you permission to leave the room. You may rest, I said. But you have to stay. I can't have you running around during office hours." He fixates his eyes on his monitor and slumps back on his wheeled chair.

Mikasa went back to her seat and gave him the middle finger from under her desk. It looks like she has to play here.

Pulling out her laptop out of its black bag, Mikasa pushes some random work materials out of her desk and into her drawer to make some space.

She started it, connected to the Wi-Fi and logged into her account.

Whenever she logs in, she would look at her ranking in her profile first. As of the last time she was online, she was on the top of the list of players. She had the highest scouting score and scored tons of points during her training days. _LilMika_ was the highest ranking player in all Japan. The pride and contentment she felt good whenever she logged in, ready to scout.

However, today marked a ray of disappointment in Mikasa's short gaming life as someone has just passed her highest record in scouting. Someone named _LanceCorporal_ has surpassed the digits any other player has dared to surpass but has failed. He was two thousand points higher than her.

Mikasa heated in her seat. She had to know who this person behind such a mysterious character was. His profile picture was a question mark. It intrigued her.

With one click, Mikasa went to the character's profile. It consisted of the medals he's obtained and the position he was in. This guy probably entered a lot of ranking scouts for him to be a Captain of one of the Scouting Legion's special squads.

Just like Mikasa's character, this LanceCorporal wore the signature brown jacket with the Flugel no Freiheit insignia which was a white wing over a blue one and a white shirt under it. They had the same set of straps and leather boots. The only thing different about him in the physical aspect of his uniform was the white cravat that was hanging from his shirt. This character was also oozing with sex appeal. He had dark black hair and a slightly buff built. He was also tall, very tall. Though, Mikasa failed to see those details. The only thing she paid attention to was the elaborate build-up of the character's pale face. He had a tall nose bridge and flat cheekbones. His eyebrows here pointed towards each other as it complimented his dark deep-seated eyes. His whole face was well-carved. It was a face she knew well. He had an undercut while the bangs of his black hair were parted at the middle.

The character looked quite similar to one of the default characters at the introduction of the game. Maybe it was a coincidence too, because Mikasa actually based LilMika off the little girl in the cover of the game and also her own appearance too. She found it odd that she resembled a game character. But that probably has happened anyway.

But there was that eerie feeling about this LanceCorporal and how he looked too similar to—

Mikasa beamed at the 3D character then at Levi. Afterwards, she stared intently at her boss' pc.

It might be a mere coincidence but there was only one way to find out.

LilMika challenged LanceCorporal to a friendly match. _

Mikasa looked for something in Levi's eyes. Was he Humanity's Strongest Player?_

Evidently, Levi straightened his back and focused more on his computer's monitor, leaning forward.

After a few second Mikasa received as a notification.

LanceCorporal accepted. _

The two black-haired entities meet outside the training camp of the 105th squad of trainees. The humid wind blew and LilMika's red scarf waved in the dusty air. It was sunset when their battle begun.

—

Both players used nothing more but their bare hands and combat skills. No sword shall hurt a fellow human trying to survive in this mad world where titans exist. _

LilMika had the disadvantage, being shorter than her opponent. But she was the offensive. _

_LanceCroporal used his size to deflect all attacks from her.

—

LilMika punches him in the gut.

_LanceCorporal barely moves an inch and barely shows a reaction. He swiftly pushes the shorter opponent to the ground and carries her.

—

A knock on the door disrupts the silence circulating through the spacious room. Levi stands up to entertain the guest.

It was Nanabi of the Finance department. He was old, blonde, and completely stressed out.

Suddenly _LanceCorporal_'s movements stopped. Mikasa peered at Levi who was standing closely at the door.

"Sir, she needs a report onâ€"

Levi was on beast mode as he faced Nanabi with his pointed eyebrows, sharp eyes and a big frown on his lips. His arms were crossed, signaling that he doesn't care. "I don't have time for this." He cuts.

Nanabi starts sweating. He was greatly taller than Levi but he was scared of the little man. "Um."

"Can't you see I was in the middle of something? I can't pause it!"

"I'm sorry sir, but she needs you. It shall be very quick."

Levi scowls. "Ok then."

They both leave the room and Levi slams the door shut.

Mikasa stands up after making sure her opponent wasn't making anymore movement. "He's not moving, huh? And Levi just left his computerâ€|" She tiptoes towards the other end of the room where Levi's things were organized on his working desk, his pc, left open.

"Only one way to find out." _One more step._

Levi opened the door and causally walked in, catching Mikasa sitting on one of the chairs in front of his desk. "What are you doing?"

Mikasa slowly stands up and looks around for an answer to his question. She couldn't think of a believable excuse. It was Levi. Levi is not the most gullible person. "I justâ€|"

"Never mind." He goes back to his seat. "Start getting serious by three."

Mikasa was about to go back to her seat when Levi's fingers went back to action, typing and ravishing the keyboard.

"Wait I have something to ask you. Come here."

It was finally her chance to see what he was doing behind the computer. She was interested what it was all about. And, she wanted to know if he was the person behind Humanity's Strongest.

She went beside his desk, trying to go for an angle wherein she'll see what he was doing on his pc.

_LilMika stopped moving as LanceCorporal pinned her to the ground and did not cease punching the younger soldier. The girl was coughing out blood. _

â€"Levi Ackermanâ€"

Levi completely ignored Mikasa's presence beside him as she was watching him beat the crap out of her character.

Just like Mikasa, Levi's curiosity sprang when, out of nowhere, he received an invitation from a new challenger whom he learned was the second strongest player. He quickly went through her profile when he saw the resemblance between the character and his subordinate across the room, Mikasa, who was absorbed in what she was doing on her laptop.

He accepted. The fight happened.

He decided to call over Mikasa to prove his conclusion. She left her laptop. _LilMika_ ceased to move.

After draining _LilMika_ of her Life Points, he couldn't help but smirk at the screen. "Do you know what this game is, Mikasa?"

He saw her tense up. Her eyes seemed darker and her lips were quivering with anger.

For Levi, reading people were easy as pie. He was an observant person and he knew how to read people who aren't that transparent or straightforward with their emotions just like Mikasa. For him, she was an enigma, always showing no emotion. He knew she was different.

Mikasa was not like the other girls who would do anything humiliating to catch his attention.

The raven-head bit her lower lip and averted her eyes from his gaze. She intently looked at the screen. "M-My brother plays that. So do I."

That confirmed his thoughts. Levi stood up from his seat. "As you might've have seen, I'm _LanceCorporal_." He gazed at her head to toe. She was shaking not from fear but from pure hatred. His conclusions were totally correct. "Might you be _LilMika_?"

Mikasa nodded, defeated.

"Judging by your profile you haven't had any losses yet."

Mikasa nodded, this time she dared to look at him in the eye. "I always disconnect before committing a loss. I've never died in a scout. I have, no, had a title to hold." She exhaled. "I was

Humanity's strongest Playerâ€¦until you came along."

Levi sat down again and positioned himself in front of his pc. "I did not enter the gaming world just because I wanted to have fun or just because this is the industry we are in. I started playing this because of a person."

"Why are you telling me this?"

Opening a drawer under his desk, he took out an old newspaper clipping from two months ago. He held it up and motioned Mikasa to get it. She did and she read the headline aloud. "_Twenty five year old commits suicide similar to how she died in a game_â€¦"

Mikasa read the first few lines of the article which seemed to be ripped off from its original bundle. As her eyes brushed each line her eye widened with disbelief.

"Yeah, you read it right. Petra Ral died in a game when a titan slammed her on a tree. The police found her in the same position in an empty lot somewhere in her neighborhood. She was lying down on the foot of a tree, bloody, dead." Levi monotonous voice echoed in Mikasa's mind.

Mikasa threw the article on his desk, backing away slowly. "That's such a coincidenceâ€¦a creepy coincidence."

Levi rubbed his temples. "Petra was my girlfriend. We met online and she invited me to play this game with her. It was fun. I scouted with her every single day. We also played with other friends. But one time, the day before she died, we scouted deeper into the forest outside the walls. My whole team was wiped out by a single titan."

He took the newspaper clipping and crumpled it. "It wasn't only Petra who died in real life. All our other teammates were also found dead in empty lots or grassy places near their homes."

Mikasa couldn't believe what she was hearing from her boss. First of all, it was the first time he had a conversation with her with more than three sentences. And all the things he said were unbelievable but seeing that there was an article about his girlfriend's death scared her.

"I'm sorry for your loss. But, what does this have to do with me?"

"It's not just them, Mikasa. Other people have been dying when they die in-game. Their families have no idea what's happening. Even the authorities have no idea where they should start because all the deaths were reported as suicide. It may be a psychological problem with some players, but when they researched and investigated the company that produced the game, there was nothing wrong. Nothing seemed off. However, there are three out of five cases wherein the person dies in real life the same when in-game." Levi explained.

"What do you want me to do about that, stop playing?" Mikasa winced.

"A big part of this company and numerous students from WA play this game on a daily basis, but only a few die in real life. We're still trying to figure out the pattern." Levi stated.

"What do you mean by, 'we'?"

Levi sighed. "When I told all this to Hanji she gradually joined me. We want to get to the bottom of this mystery. So, don't die. You have to help us."

Mikasa crossed her arms. "What's in it for me?"

"You have a brother who plays this too, right?"

TO BE CONTINUED...

End
file.